AFRICA REPARATIONS MOVEMENT (UK)

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BIRMINGHAM DECLARATION

We, being people of African origin resident in Britain, having met at the Birmingham Conference on Reparations on the 11th December 1993, under the auspices of the Africa Reparations Movement(UK), taking account of the Abuja Proclamation of the Group of Eminent Persons, and the call by the Organisation of African Unity(OAU), to Africans in Africa and the diaspora, to set up National Committees for Reparations.

Recalling the severe and crippling damage done to Africa and its diaspora by European enslavement, colonialism, and neo-colonialism.

Convinced that people of African origin have a just case, morally and in law, for compensation and redress for the most heinous crimes ever committed against humanity; the legacy of which continues to afflict and debilitate Africa and its diaspora to this day; particularly the destruction of African culture and civilisation, the interruption and usurpation of African advances in mathematics, science, medicine and theology, and the killing of African people in genocidal proportions.

Convinced that the current position of Africans in Africa and in the diaspora, emanates from the devastating experiences of enslavement, colonialism, neo-colonialisim, and racism, and is manifested in the following:-

- Debt bondage
- Arms trade/militarism
- Unfair trading practices, as reinforced by the GATT
- Exploitative transnational companies
- Environmental damage
- The inequities of the international financial system
- The imposition of IMF/WB Structural Adjustment Programmes
- The brain drain and the flight of capital and resources
- The removal and destruction of infra-structure
- The destruction of the African family
- The denial of African women's rights, particularly in matters of development, as human rights
- Cultural Imperialism
- The gross media mis-representation of Africa and its peoples
- The distortion of African history and heritage by, inter alia, the removal of African monuments, artefacts and religious objects
- The political,economic and social destabilization of African countries
- The assault on the sensibilities of the African personality.

The consequences of which are, inter alia, the erosion of our cultural identity, the manipulation of the African psyche, the rape of our lands and the arrestation of our development.

Convinced that the murders in Britain, of Rolan Adams, Steven Lawrence, Joy Gardner, Cynthia Jarrett, Omasase Lumumba and others, are the result of the undervaluing of African lives, and the social deprivation we endure in an inherently racist society; which includes, disproportionately high levels of unemployment, bad housing, over-representation in mental health institutions and prisons, the supposed under-achievement of African children in the education system, are all the direct result of a system that continues to marginalize, mis-represent and oppress us.

Recognising that despite these obstacles, African people have displayed remarkable resilience, and have demonstrated the ability to resist overwhelming adversity, including the denial of the right to self- determination and open access to legal redress for the atrocities perpetrated against us by peoples of European origin.

Accepting our responsibility and obligation to our ancestors for ensuring that the African identity is proclaimed, maintained, and developed; and that Africa is restored to its rightful place at the centre of world politics.

Call upon all people of African origin in the Caribbean, Africa, Europe the Americas and elsewhere to support the movement for reparations and join forces with a view to forming a strong united front capable of exposing, confronting and overcoming the psychological, economic and cultural harm inflicted upon us by peoples of European origin.

Convinced of the validity of our claim both in international law and morality and mindful of Britain's pivotal role, as the major slave trading nation, we demand an apology from the British Queen as Britain's Head of State.

Call upon the British Government to make reparations and give full compensation to peoples of African origin, for the economic exploitation and dehumanisation inherent in European enslavement, colonialism and neo-colonialism.

Call upon the Western Industrialised Nations to acknowledge and put in place machinery to redress the perverse imbalances in the international economic and financial systems, as it is our opinion that these imbalances continue to arrest the development of Africa.

Further demand the restitution of African monuments, artefacts, and religious objects residing in British Museums and elsewhere in Britain.

Urge the peoples of the Arab World to support our just cause and acknowledge the role they played in our enslavement.

Note that although we are people of African origin, concerned for and actively seeking redress for Africa and its diaspora, this does not negate our right to live our lives and pursue our livelihoods wherever we choose, whether in Britain, the Caribbean, the Americas, Africa or Europe; as this right is predicated on the blood, sweat and tears of the current and previous generations of Africans.

Dated This First Day of January Nineteen Hundred & Ninety Four